## 2014 Election Information Packet for Residential Design Review Committees and Village Associations

## **Contents**

| Introduction  | 2  |
|---|----|
|   |    |
| 2014 Positions and Term Length  | 2  |
|   |    |
| Important Dates for All Candidates  | 4  |
| 2014 Polling Location for All Villages  |    |
| Convenience Voting Hours  | 6  |
| 2014 Polling Location for All Villages  Convenience Voting Hours  Election Day Voting Hours | 6  |
|   |    |
| New for This Year   | 7  |
| Signage Criteria  | 7  |
| Signage Criteria  |    |
| Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)   | 8  |
|   |    |
| Important Reminders   | 10 |
|   |    |

**Attachments: Election Procedures** 

## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your interest in one of the many elected village offices in The Woodlands. Elections will be held in February for the Residential Design Review Committees (RDRCs) and the Village Associations. *The Woodlands Township Board of Directors election follows a different process.* The Woodlands Township will administer the February elections for Residential Design Review Committees (RDRC) and village association boards.

Candidates for office need a copy of each of the following:

- Election Information Packet
- Filing Form (for the specific position the candidate is seeking)

It is the responsibility of the candidate to become familiar with the bylaws of the entity, the duties, qualifications and requirements of the office for which the candidate files.

If at any point you have a question regarding the election process, please call The Woodlands Township at 281-210-3800.

## RESIDENTIAL DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE ELECTIONS THE WOODLANDS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION COVENANTS THE WOODLANDS ASSOCIATION COVENANTS AS OF 09/30/14 5 Member Residential Design Review Committee (RDRC), one year terms, for the following villages: Alden Bridge Indian Springs (WCA Covenants) Cochran's Crossing Indian Springs (TWA Covenants) College Park (TWA Covenants) Panther Creek Creekside Park Sterling Ridge Grogan's Mill 3 Member Residential Design Review Committee (RDRC), one year terms, for the following village: Grogan's Mill - East Shore

Note: Throughout the transition in governance, The Woodlands Community Association (WCA) Covenants and The Woodlands Association Covenants(TWA) continue to be encumbered on property throughout The Woodlands. As prescribed by the Covenants, resident-elected committees serve to facilitate property improvements of their peers and are elected to one-year terms.

|  | VILLAGE ASSOCIATION ELECTIONS   |                     |                   |  |  |  |  |
|--|---|---------------------|-------------------|--|--|--|--|
| (listed in chronological order of formation) |   |                     |                   |  |  |  |  |
|  |   |                     |                   |  |  |  |  |
| VILLAGE                                      | POSITION  | TERM                | ELECTION<br>YEAR  |  |  |  |  |
| Grogan's Mill                                | 7 Area Reps – At Large  | 2 year              | Odd               |  |  |  |  |
|  | 8 Area Reps – At Large  | 2 year              | Even              |  |  |  |  |
|  | (residents as of 09/30/13 – 15,227)   |                     |                   |  |  |  |  |
| Panther Creek                                | President   | 2 year              | Even              |  |  |  |  |
|  | Vice President  | 2 year              | Odd               |  |  |  |  |
|  | Secretary   | 2 year              | Odd               |  |  |  |  |
|  | Treasurer   | 2 year              | Even              |  |  |  |  |
|  | 6A Area Reps – At Large   | 2 year              | Odd               |  |  |  |  |
|  | 6B Area Reps – At Large   | 2 year              | Even              |  |  |  |  |
|  | (residents as of 09/30/13 – 14,136)   |                     |                   |  |  |  |  |
| Cochran's Crossing                           | 18 Area Reps – At Large   | 1 year              |                   |  |  |  |  |
|  | (residents as of 09/30/13 – 15,938)   |                     |                   |  |  |  |  |
| Indian Springs                               | President   | 2 year              | Odd               |  |  |  |  |
|  | Vice President  | 2 year              | Even              |  |  |  |  |
|  | Secretary   | 2 year              | Odd               |  |  |  |  |
|  | Treasurer   | 2 year              | Even              |  |  |  |  |
|  | 6 Area Reps – At Large  | 2 year              | Odd               |  |  |  |  |
|  | 6 Area Reps – At Large  | 2 year              | Even              |  |  |  |  |
|  | (residents as of 09/30/13 – 6,355)  Indian Springs Village Association (ISVA) candidates for off term as an area representative or officer. | ficer positions mus | t have served one |  |  |  |  |
|  |   |                     |                   |  |  |  |  |
| Alden Bridge                                 | 10 Area Reps – At Large   | 2 year              | Odd               |  |  |  |  |
|  | 9 Area Reps – At Large  | 2 year              | Even              |  |  |  |  |
|  | (residents as of 09/30/13 – 21,763)   |                     |                   |  |  |  |  |

| College Park   | President  |        | 2 year | Odd  |  |  |
|----------------|--|--------|--------|------|--|--|
|                | Vice President   |        | 2 year | Even |  |  |
|                | Secretary  |        | 2 year | Odd  |  |  |
|                | Treasurer  |        | 2 year | Even |  |  |
|                | 9 Area Reps – At Large   |        | 1 year |      |  |  |
|                | (residents as of 09/30/13 – 6,935 Grogan's Forest and Harper's Landing; 688 Windsor Hills)  Nine (9) at large representatives to represent the areas of Grogan's Forest, Windsor Hills and Harper's Landing within the Village of College Park.  College Park Village Association (CPVA) candidates for Executive Officer positions must have completed a minimum of two (2) years of service as an Area Representative on the CPVA board or have previously held an Executive Officer position on the CPVA board. |        |        |      |  |  |
| Sterling Ridge | 7 Village Directors  |        | 2 year | Even |  |  |
| Coloning mage  | 8 Village Directors  |        | 2 year | Odd  |  |  |
|                | (residents as of 09/30/13– 14,997)   |        |        |      |  |  |
| Creekside Park | President  | 2 year | Odd    |      |  |  |
|                | Vice President   | 2 year | Even   |      |  |  |
|                | Secretary  | 2 year | Odd    |      |  |  |
|                | Treasurer  | 2 year | Even   |      |  |  |
|                | Events Chair   | 1 year |        |      |  |  |
|                | 6 Area Reps - At Large   | 1 year |        |      |  |  |
|                | (residents as of 09/30/13– 6,735)  |        |        |      |  |  |

## IMPORTANT DATES

## For All Candidates

## 12/26/13 - 1/16/14

## **Filing Period**

The filing period begins December 26, 2013, at 8:30 A.M. and ends January 16, 2014, at 5:00 P.M. Candidates must complete all information on the filing form (found in the *Filing Form Packet*). Candidates for RDRC positions or village association offices can return their completed filing form in person, by mail, or by facsimile to:

The Woodlands Township Attn: February Election 2801 Technology Forest Blvd The Woodlands, TX 77381

Fax: 281-210-3978

#### 1/22/14 Deadline to Retract Candidacy

Any candidate, who decides not to run for office after submitting a filing form must submit a letter, signed by the candidate, requesting that his/her name be removed from the ballot no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, January 22, 2014.

## Deadline to File as a Write-in Candidate

Candidates who are interested in running, but do not file by the regular filing deadline will be able to run as a write-in candidate *only* if they file as such by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, January 22, 2014. Write-in votes will not be counted unless the person whose name is written in has filed a declaration of write-in candidacy by the write-in deadline.

## Cancellation of Unopposed Races

The election for any Residential Design Review Committee or Village Association that does not have a contested race as of 5 p.m. on January 22, 2014, will be cancelled and the seating and/or filling of vacancies will proceed in accordance with the entity's bylaws

## 1/23/14 Joint Election Committee Meeting—Order of Names on Ballot

The order in which names of candidates will appear on the ballot will be established by a drawing conducted by the Joint Election Committee at this meeting. All candidates are invited to attend the meeting to observe this drawing. This meeting will be held at 6:00 P.M. at The Woodlands Township, 2801 Technology Forest Blvd.

## 2/10/14 - 2/14/14 Convenience (Early) Voting

The Woodlands Township 2801 Technology Forest Blvd.

Monday through Friday: 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.

#### 2/15/14 Election Day

The Woodlands Township 2801 Technology Forest Blvd.

8 A.M. to 6 P.M.

### **Posting of Election Results**

After the results have been tabulated and verified, the election results will be available online, go to The Woodlands Township website, www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov.

## **Election Calendar**

| Election Process                                    | Start    | End     |    | December 2013 |     |        |      |    |    |
|---|----------|---------|----|---------------|-----|--------|------|----|----|
|   |          |         | S  | M             | Т   | W      | T    | F  | S  |
|   |          |         | 1  | 2             | 3   | 4      | 5    | 6  | 7  |
| Filing Packets Available                            | 12.16.13 |         | 8  | 9             | 10  | 11     | 12   | 13 | 14 |
|   |          |         | 15 | 16            | 17  | 18     | 19   | 20 | 21 |
| Filing  | 12.26.13 | 1.16.14 | 22 | 23            | 24  | 25     | 26   | 27 | 28 |
|   |          |         | 29 | 30            | 31  |        |      |    |    |
|   |          |         |    |               |     |        |      |    |    |
|   |          |         |    |               | Jan | uary 2 | 2014 |    |    |
| Last Day to File Declaration of Write- In Candidacy | 1.22.14  |         | s  | М             | т   | w      | т    | F  | s  |
|   |          |         |    |               |     | 1      | 2    | 3  | 4  |
| Last Day to Retract Filing                          | 1.22.14  |         | 5  | 6             | 7   | 8      | 9    | 10 | 11 |
|   |          |         | 12 | 13            | 14  | 15     | 16   | 17 | 18 |
| Joint Election Committee Meeting                    | 1.23.14  |         | 19 | 20            | 21  | 22     | 23   | 24 | 25 |
|   |          |         | 26 | 27            | 28  | 29     | 30   | 31 |    |
|   |          |         |    |               |     |        |      |    |    |
|   |          |         |    | February 2014 |     |        |      |    |    |
|   |          |         | S  | M             | Т   | W      | T    | F  | S  |
| Convenience Voting                                  | 2.10.14  | 2.14.14 |    |               |     |        |      |    | 1  |
|   |          |         | 2  | 3             | 4   | 5      | 6    | 7  | 8  |
| Election Day  | 2.15.14  |         | 9  | 10            | 11  | 12     | 13   | 14 | 15 |
|   |          |         | 16 | 17            | 18  | 19     | 20   | 21 | 22 |
|   |          |         | 23 | 24            | 25  | 26     | 27   | 28 |    |

## 2014 POLLING LOCATION FOR ALL VILLAGES

The Woodlands Township 2801 Technology Forest Blvd. The Woodlands, TX 77381

Convenience Voting: Monday, February 10 – Friday, February 14, 2014, from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M.

Election Day: Saturday, February 15, 2014, from 8 A.M. to 6 P.M.

#### **NEW FOR THIS YEAR**

For the February 2014 election, changes will be implemented to the Election procedures, as approved on November 20, 2013 by The Woodlands Township. Candidates who are interested in running, but do not file by the deadline will be able to run as a write-in candidate *only* if they file as such by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, January 22, 2014. For any Residential Design Review Committee or Village Association that does not have a contested race as of 5 p.m. on January 22, 2014, the entity's election will be cancelled and the seating and/or filling of vacancies will proceed in accordance with the entity's bylaws

## SIGNAGE CRITERIA

#### RESIDENTIAL DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE AND VILLAGE ASSOCIATION CANDIDATE SIGNS MUST:

- 1. Be in good repair and aesthetically pleasing, in keeping with the character of the community.
- 2. Not be lighted, accompanied by music, sound, balloons or streamers, or be distracting to motorists.
- 3. Be ground mounted, and not attached in any way to plant material, light standards, or other existing structures or objects.
- 4. Not exceed 6 square feet in area, and 5 feet in total installed height (including mounting and/or post, if any).
- 5. Not be placed in the public road right-of-way.
- 6. Be a placard, banner, flag or device that promotes a candidate or an issue. A 2-sided sign is considered one sign.
- 7. Not remove trees or other vegetation, for the installation or visibility of the sign.
- 8. Be made of materials in accordance with the Standards, such as, Plywood, flat rigid plastic, foam board and/or metal. Corrugated fiberglass, plastic and cardboard are not acceptable.
- 9. Be removed within 24 hours following the day of the election.
  - Trained designees have the right to remove any candidate sign in violation of this standard, County Ordinance and state laws.
  - All candidates are urged to review signage limitations with their campaign staff and workers and remove signs immediately after the elections. A clean-up fee may be incurred for signs in violation of the standards. An offense of the County Ordinance is a Class C Misdemeanor and is punishable by a fine up to \$500.00. For more information call 281.210.3800.
  - Residential Design Review Committee or Village Association candidate signs which conform to these Standards are pre-approved and require no application permit or approval.

#### **Election Day**

- 1. Residential Design Review Committee or Village Association candidate signs may be placed at the polling place 24 hours before the regular election day and must be removed within 24 hours following the day of the election.
- 2. Candidates must keep electioneering and signage at least 25 feet and not more than 200 yards from the outside entrance to the polling site.
- 3. Electioneering activities at the polling site are limited to the distribution of literature and personal communication.

#### **Convenience Voting**

- 1. Two (2) Residential Design Review Committee or Village Association candidate signs promoting each candidate or issue on the ballot may be place at least 25 feet from, but not more than 200 yards from, the outside entrance to the early voting polling site during the 20 day period preceding the date of the regular or runoff election.
- 2. One Residential Design Review Committee or Village Association candidate sign promoting a candidate for each office or issue on the ballot may be placed on each Single Family Lot (single family dwellings may be detached, or attached, townhouses, duplexes, or condominiums, excluding apartments) and/or each tract of land (commercial properties) with the written consent of the owner beginning the 20th day preceding the regular election day, and must be removed within 24 hours following the day of the regular or runoff election.
- 3. Candidates must keep electioneering and signage at least 25 feet from the outside entrance to the polling site.
- 4. Electioneering activities at the polling site are limited to the distribution of literature and personal communication.

### **Generic Voting Signs**

- 1. Generic voting signs are displayed during the convenience voting period and on Election Day.
- 2. Generic voting signs are signs placed or installed by The Woodlands Township which do not advocate or support a particular candidate or issue.
- 3. The generic voting signs must be removed within 24 hours following Election Day.

#### **State Law**

Section 393 of the Texas Transportation Code states, among others, that:

- A person may not place a sign in the Right of Way of a public road unless the placement of the sign is authorized by State Law.
- An offense under this section is a Class C misdemeanor.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

#### Who is eligible to file for positions?

Filing is open to Woodlands Township residents and property owners age 18 and over who are *in good standing*, according to The Woodlands Community Association (WCA) Covenants and/or The Woodlands Association (TWA) Covenants. Some positions require residency and/or property ownership in specific villages (see specific entity's Bylaws for further information.)

#### Do I need to register to vote?

Voter registration is not needed to vote in the Residential Design Review Committee and Village Association elections at this time.

#### Who is eligible to vote?

All persons 18 years or older who live (as a resident) or own property in The Woodlands and who are members in good standing are eligible to vote. A member is NOT in good standing if they are delinquent in the payment of any previous annual assessment, or other fees or charges (other than user fees as defined in The Woodlands Community Association (WCA) Covenants and/or The Woodlands Association (TWA) Covenants).

#### How is voter eligibility determined?

To determine if someone is eligible to vote, two things must be verified: identity and residency/ownership status.

### How do I prove my identity?

A current voter registration card or any form of photo ID (driver's license, student ID, employee ID, etc.) can be used.

### How do I prove my residency or ownership status?

Voters can provide any of the following examples of residency or ownership proof:

- A current driver's license
- A current utility bill
- o Title or lease papers of the property
- Current bank checks imprinted with an address in The Woodlands
- Current voter registration card

# • I just moved to The Woodlands and none of my identification cards have my new address on them. How can I prove my residency?

A current utility bill, title or lease papers of your property would be sufficient, along with any form of photo ID.

#### What is the deadline to vote?

The deadline to vote is February 15, 2014. The polling site is open from 8 A.M. to 6 P.M. Convenience voting is also available for one week prior to the Election Date.

## • I will be out of town on Election Day. Can I vote earlier?

There are two other methods of voting available to residents and property owners:

#### Absentee Ballots:

Call The Woodlands Township office at 281-210-3800 to obtain the absentee ballot and instructions to complete and return the ballot.

## Convenience Voting:

Residents and property owners may take advantage of convenience voting from February 10 through 14 at:

The Woodlands Township

2801 Technology Forest Blvd.

Monday through Friday from 9 AM - 5 P.M.

#### How do I find out which village I live in?

Call The Woodlands Township office at 281-210-3800 prior to Election Day or ask the Election Judges or poll workers at the polling site on Election Day.

#### How do I find out where I can vote?

All voting in the Residential Design Review Committee and Village Association Election will be held at The Woodlands Township office located at 2801 Technology Forest Blvd.

#### How do I find out the names of candidates during this election?

The Woodlands Township will issue news releases with names of all candidates. Visit The Woodlands Township website (<a href="www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov">www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov</a>), or call 281-210-3800.

## Is proxy voting allowed?

No, voting by proxy is not allowed.

• I am not a citizen of the United States; does this mean I cannot vote in the Residential Design Review Committee and Village Association elections?

U.S. citizenship is not required to vote in the Residential Design Review Committee and Village Association elections. However, U.S. citizenship is required to vote in federal, state and local elections, including those for The Woodlands Township Board of Directors.

Can I vote for any of the candidates?

Eligible voters may cast ballots only in those villages where they reside or own property.

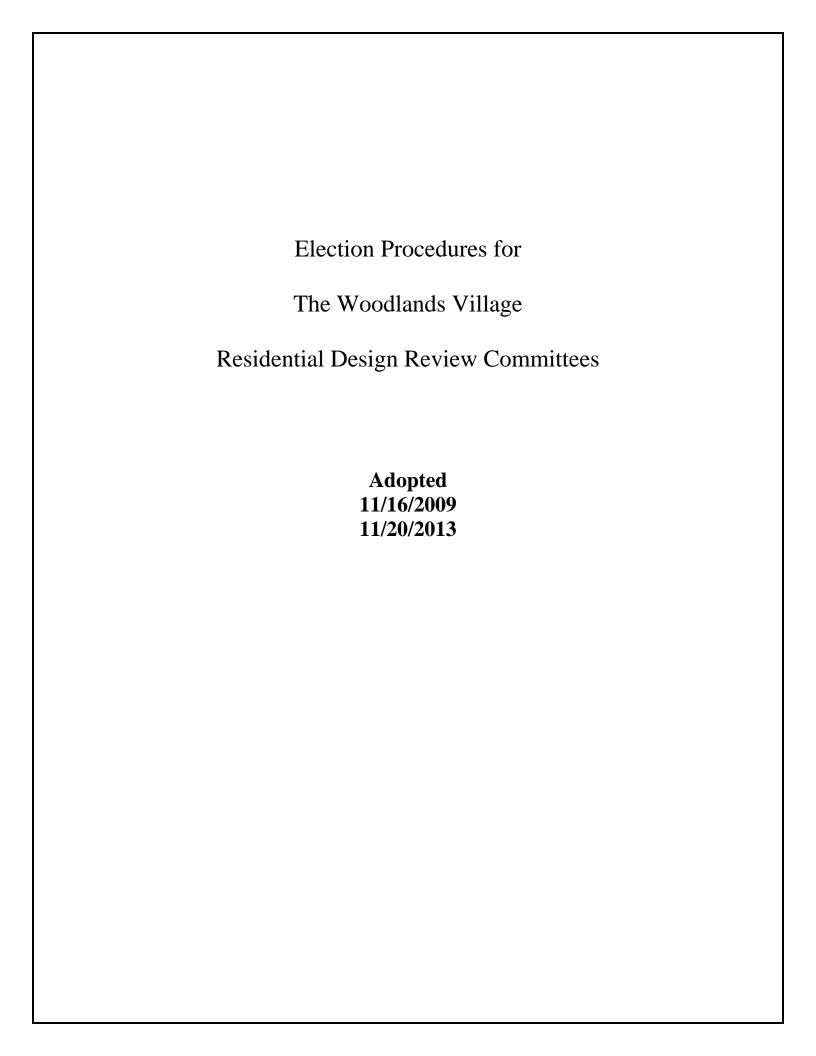
Can I write in the name(s) of candidates I am interested in voting for?
 Note: Those voting for a write in candidate must not only write in the candidate's name, but also mark the circle on the ballot next to the candidate's name. There will not be any special procedures for write in candidates and the names of any write in candidate may not be posted at any polling location. Write-in votes will not be counted unless the person whose name is written in has filed a statement of write-in candidacy by the deadline of 5 p.m. on January 22, 2014.

## **NEW THIS YEAR**

Candidates who are interested in running, but do not file by the deadline will be able to run as a write-in candidate *only* if they file as such by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, January 22, 2014. For any Residential Design Review Committee or Village Association that does not have a contested race as of 5 p.m. on January 22, the entity's election will be cancelled and the seating and/or filling of vacancies will proceed in accordance with the entity's bylaws. Check The Woodlands Township Website for a list of contested races and cancellations.

## **IMPORTANT REMINDERS**

- Retrieve your appropriate Filing Form for the office(s) for which you would like to run.
- **Complete Filing Forms** and submit according to procedure to The Woodlands Township by the filing deadline.
- Read and refer to each individual Residential Design Review Committee and village association Bylaws for candidate eligibility requirements.
- Refer to The Woodlands Township (www.thewoodlandstownship-tx.gov) for:
  - Covenants and Standards
  - Residential Design Review Committee Bylaws
  - Village Association Bylaws
  - Election information, including Filing Forms



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

| ARTICLE 1 – DEFINITIONS  | 1 |
|--|---|
| Article 1.1 Election Committee   | 1 |
| Article 1.2 Election Judges  | 1 |
| Article 1.3 Election Workers   | 1 |
| Article 1.4 Capitalized Terms  |   |
| •  |   |
| ARTICLE 2 – GENERAL  | 1 |
| Article 2.1 Elections  |   |
| Article 2.2 RDRC Committees  | 1 |
| Article 2.3 Village Association Officers                                     | 1 |
| ARTICLE 3 – CALLING THE ELECTION   | 2 |
| Article 3.1 Date   |   |
| Article 3.2 Polling Locations  |   |
| Article 3.3 Voting Hours   |   |
| č  |   |
| ARTICLE 4 – PRESS RELEASES AND NOTICES                                       | 2 |
| Article 4.1 General Notification of Elections and Filing Period              | 2 |
| Article 4.2 Notification of Candidates, Polling Locations, Voting Hours, Etc | 2 |
| ARTICLE 5 – FILING FOR CANDIDACY   | 2 |
| Article 5.1 Candidate Qualifications   |   |
| Article 5.2 Filing Dates   |   |
| Article 5.3 Filing Forms   |   |
| Article 5.4 Filing Form Submission.  |   |
| Article 5.5 Filing Retraction  |   |
| Article 5.6 Acknowledgements   |   |
| Article 5.7 Write-In Candidates  |   |
|  |   |
| ARTICLE 6 - CANCELLING ELECTIONS   |   |
| Article 6.1 Races with Unopposed Candidates                                  |   |
| Article 6.2 Notice of Cancellation   | 3 |
| ARTICLE 7 – ELECTIONEERING   | 4 |
| Article 7.1 Electioneering   | 4 |
| ARTICLE 8 – POLL WATCHERS  | 1 |
| Article 8.1 Appointment  |   |
| Article 8.1 Appointment  |   |
| Article 8.3 Service, Duties, and Privileges                                  |   |
| Article 8.4 Prohibitions   |   |

| ARTICLI | E 9 – SIGNS, FLAGS AND BANNERS                          | 4 |
|---------|---|---|
| Ar      | ticle 9.1 Polling Place                                 | 4 |
| Ar      | rticle 9.2 Residential Lots                             | 4 |
| Ar      | rticle 9.3 Street Right-Of-Way                          | 5 |
|         | rticle 9.4 Political Signs                              |   |
| ARTICLI | E 10 – PREPARATION OF ELECTION MATERIALS                | 5 |
|         | rticle 10.1 Forms and Information                       |   |
| Ar      | rticle 10.2 Ballots                                     | 5 |
| ARTICLI | E 11 – ELIGIBLE VOTERS                                  | 5 |
| Ar      | rticle 11.1 RDRC Elections                              | 5 |
| Ar      | rticle 11.2 Village Association Elections               | 5 |
| ARTICLI | E 12 – OFFICIATING                                      | 5 |
| Ar      | ticle 12.1 Election Judges                              | 5 |
|         | rticle 12.2 Election Workers                            |   |
| ARTICLI | E 13 – OPERATING THE POLLS                              | 6 |
| Ar      | rticle 13.1 Polling Site Identification                 | 6 |
|         | ticle 13.2 Ballot Boxes                                 |   |
| Ar      | ticle 13.3 Voting                                       | 6 |
| Ar      | rticle 13.4 Ballots                                     | 6 |
| ARTICLI | E 14 – VOTING   | 6 |
| Ar      | ticle 14.1 Proof of Voter Eligibility                   | 6 |
| Ar      | rticle 14.2 Good Standing                               | 6 |
| Ar      | rticle 14.3 Receipt of Ballot                           | 6 |
| Ar      | ticle 14.4 Instructing the Voter                        | 7 |
| Ar      | rticle 14.5 Convenience Voting                          | 7 |
| Ar      | rticle 14.6 Absentee Voting                             | 7 |
| Ar      | rticle 14.7 Proxy                                       | 7 |
| ARTICLI | E 15 – CLOSING THE POLLS                                | 7 |
| Ar      | ticle 15.1 Time   | 7 |
| Ar      | rticle 15.2 Ballot Box                                  | 7 |
| Ar      | rticle 15.3 Unused Ballots and Other Election Materials | 7 |
| ARTICLI | E 16 – ELECTION RESULTS                                 | 8 |
|         | ticle 16.1 Counting Votes                               |   |
|         | ticle 16.2 Counting Location                            |   |
| Ar      | ticle 16.3 Recounts                                     | 8 |
| Ar      | ticle 16.4 Certification of Election Results            | 8 |
|         | rticle 16.5 Posting of Election Results                 |   |
| Ar      | ticle 16.6 Winner                                       | 8 |

| Article 16.7 Tie Votes        | 8 |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Article 16.8 Disqualification | 8 |

These procedures, adopted by The Woodlands Township, govern elections for each of the Village Residential Design Review Committees in accordance with the respective Covenants and By-Laws of each entity. In addition, by agreement by each of the separate Village Associations, these procedures also apply to Village Association elections. Should one or more of the Village Associations withdraw from this agreement, the agreement remains in effect for the remaining Village Associations. Changes to these procedures will be made by The Woodlands Township Board of Directors; the most current version serves as the governing procedures. The Village Associations will be provided notice of any adopted changes by December 1<sup>st</sup> of the year preceding the election.

#### **ARTICLE 1 – DEFINITIONS**

**ARTICLE 1.1 ELECTION COMMITTEE.** An Election Committee will be established to serve as an advisory committee to staff. Each RDRC and each Village Association may appoint one member to serve on the Election Committee.

**ARTICLE 1.2 ELECTION JUDGES.** The Election Judge must oversee and monitor the election and the election workers at the polls.

**ARTICLE 1.3 ELECTION WORKERS.** Election Workers must conduct the election according to these procedures and the Covenants and By-Laws of each of the separate entities as they may apply. Election Workers operate the polls and/or assist in vote counting after the close of the polls.

**ARTICLE 1.4 CAPITALIZED TERMS.** All other capitalized terms shall have the meaning as defined in the Covenants or By-Laws of each of the separate entities. In case of conflict, the Covenants prevail.

#### ARTICLE 2 – GENERAL

**ARTICLE 2.1 ELECTIONS.** Joint annual elections will be held to elect the members of the Residential Design Review Committees for each Village and Village Association officers and representatives.

**ARTICLE 2.2 RDRC COMMITTEES.** Each Village will elect individuals to serve on the RDRC for that village in a manner prescribed in the By-Laws of each of the RDRC's. The number of positions for each RDRC is determined by the By-Laws of that RDRC.

**ARTICLE 2.3 VILLAGE ASSOCIATION OFFICERS.** Each Village Association will elect officers and representatives in a manner prescribed in the By-Laws of the Village Associations.

#### ARTICLE 3 – CALLING THE ELECTION

**ARTICLE 3.1 DATE**. Unless changed by The Woodlands Township Board, the date of the election will be the third Saturday in February.

**ARTICLE 3.2 POLLING LOCATIONS.** At least one polling location will be established within The Woodlands Township in a location convenient to all residents. Locations will be established by staff of the President's office and defined no later than 45 days prior to the election date.

**ARTICLE 3.3 VOTING HOURS.** Polls will open at 8 A.M. and close at 6 P.M. on Election Day.

### ARTICLE 4 – PRESS RELEASES AND NOTICES

**ARTICLE 4.1 GENERAL NOTIFICATION OF ELECTIONS AND FILING PERIOD.** Press releases informing the residents of the election and the filing procedures will be submitted to the local papers two weeks before the filing period begins and again two weeks prior to the filing deadline.

**ARTICLE 4.2 NOTIFICATION OF CANDIDATES, POLLING LOCATIONS, VOTING HOURS, ETC.** Press releases will be submitted to local newspapers two weeks prior to the election and again one week prior to the election. Content will include polling place, voting times, positions, list of candidates, general rules, convenience and absentee voting information.

#### ARTICLE 5 – FILING FOR CANDIDACY

**ARTICLE 5.1 CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS**. Qualifications for candidacy are determined by the Covenants and/or By-Laws of the respective entities. Copies of the Covenants and By-Laws are on file at the Township offices.

**ARTICLE 5.2 FILING DATES.** Filing for all positions will begin 51 days prior to the election and will remain open until 5 P.M. of the day, which is 30 days prior to the election.

**ARTICLE 5.3 FILING FORMS.** The forms will be available through RDRC meetings, Village Association Officers, Township offices and The Woodlands Township website.

**ARTICLE 5.4 FILING FORM SUBMISSION.** Filing forms for the RDRC or Village Association may be submitted to the Township offices in person, through the mail, or sent via facsimile; however, the filing form must be received by the filing deadline. Filing forms must be signed by the candidate. Candidate's names must be clearly printed and legible. Filing forms will not be accepted either before or after the filing period. When receiving a completed filing form, an Election Worker will sign that he/she has received it, record the date and time it was received.

**ARTICLE 5.5 FILING RETRACTION.** Any candidate, who decides not to run for office after submitting a filing form must submit a letter, signed by the candidate, requesting that his/her name be removed from the ballot. This filing retraction will be accepted and considered valid provided it is received at the Township office by 5 P.M. on the fourth working day after the filing deadline and the signature matches that on the submitted filing form.

**ARTICLE 5.6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**. A copy of the filing form and an acknowledgement letter will be provided to each candidate, once eligibility is established. If there is a retraction, a similar letter of acknowledgement will be provided to the former candidate.

#### ARTICLE 5.7 WRITE-IN CANDIDATES.

Any Member who meets the candidate qualifications as established by the applicable Covenants and/or By-Laws is eligible for consideration as a write-in candidate, provided that a Statement of Candidacy is filed with the Township office by the fourth working day after the filing deadline.

Votes cast for the candidates who have not filed a Statement of Candidacy by 5 P.M., on the fourth working day after the filing deadline will not be counted in accordance with the Filing Procedures. There will not be any special procedures for write-in candidates and the names of any write-in candidate will not be posted at the polling location.

## **ARTICLE 6 – CANCELLING ELECTIONS**

**ARTICLE 6.1 RACES WITH UNOPPOSED CANDIDATES**. An election will be cancelled for any committee or association with unopposed candidates for a single position or the same number or fewer candidates than the number of at-large positions on the ballot. The cancellation of the election will not occur until after 5 P.M. on the fourth working day after the filing deadline to allow for acceptance of any candidate withdrawal or the addition of any write-in candidates.

By cancellation of the election, the unopposed candidates for any Residential Design Review Committee are declared elected and will be seated at the end of the regularly expiring term. Each Village Association shall make a determination in accordance with the requirements of its individual By-Laws.

**ARTICLE 6.2 NOTICE OF CANCELLATION**. If an election is cancelled due to unopposed candidates, notice will be provided to the current Chair of the affected Residential Design Review Committee or President of the affected Village Association. Notice of cancellation will be placed in the election section of the Township website and in at least one press release prior to the start of the voting period. For any committee or association with fewer candidates than positions open, contact information will be made available, upon request, to any volunteer who is interested in filling the vacancy through the committee's or association's standard process for filling vacancies outside of the election process.

#### ARTICLE 7 – ELECTIONEERING

**ARTICLE 7.1 ELECTIONEERING**. Candidates must keep electioneering and signage at least 25 feet from the outside entrance to the polling site. Electioneering activities at the polling site are limited to distribution of literature and personal communication.

#### **ARTICLE 8 – POLL WATCHERS**

**ARTICLE 8.1 APPOINTMENT**. Each candidate on the ballot may appoint one person per polling location to act as a poll watcher. Any candidate appointing a Watcher must notify The Woodlands Township President's office by 5 P.M. of the Wednesday prior to Election Day.

**ARTICLE 8.2 ELIGIBILITY**. To be eligible to serve as a poll watcher, the person must (1) be a member in good standing; (2) not be a candidate for any election being held on the day the watcher seeks to serve; (3) not hold an elective office in The Woodlands; (4) not be related within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity to an Election Judge or Election Worker serving at that polling location.

**ARTICLE 8.3 SERVICE, DUTIES, AND PRIVILEGES**. All Watchers must sign in and out when entering and leaving the polling location. All Watchers are permitted to observe all election activities performed by the Election Judge and Election Workers. Watchers may observe the counting of ballots. Watchers must point out to an Election Judge or Election Worker any observed violation of these Election Procedures at the time the violation occurs.

**ARTICLE 8.4 PROHIBITIONS**. Poll Watchers may not bring to the polling location any mechanical or electronic device capable or recording images or sound. Poll Watchers may not converse with any voter or communicate with or signal to any voter in any manner regarding the election.

## **ARTICLE 9 – SIGNS, FLAGS AND BANNERS**

**ARTICLE 9.1 POLLING PLACE**. The polling location will have clear signage indicating it as a voting location. Candidates' election signs shall not be placed within 25 feet and not more than 200 yards from the building entrance at each early voting polling place during the 20 day period preceding the date of the election and must not be attached upon any portion of the entryway to the polling location. The terms of The Woodlands Residential Development Standards and The Woodlands Commercial Planning and Design Standards are incorporated herein by reference, and in the event of any conflict, the terms of the Standards prevail. Signs, flags or banners must be in compliance with all state and county laws, ordinances and regulations.

**ARTICLE 9.2 RESIDENTIAL LOTS**. The terms of The Woodlands Residential Development Standards and The Woodlands Commercial Planning and Design Standards are incorporated herein by reference.

**ARTICLE 9.3 STREET RIGHT-OF-WAY**. In accordance with State Law, signs are not permitted in the Street Rights-of-Way.

**ARTICLE 9.4 POLITICAL SIGNS.** All political signs placed throughout The Woodlands must be in accordance with the sign criteria in The Woodlands Residential Development Standards and The Woodlands Commercial Planning and Design Standards and in compliance with all state and county laws, ordinances and regulations.

#### ARTICLE 10 – PREPARATION OF ELECTION MATERIALS

**ARTICLE 10.1 FORMS AND INFORMATION**. The President will approve filing forms, ballot forms, tally sheets and information sheets.

**ARTICLE 10.2 BALLOTS**. The order that the names of candidates will appear on the ballot will be established by a drawing conducted by the Election Committee. Candidates will be provided notice of the date and time and will be invited to witness the drawing.

#### **ARTICLE 11 – ELIGIBLE VOTERS**

**ARTICLE 11.1 RDRC ELECTIONS**. As established by the RDRC By-Laws, WCA and TWA Covenants, residents of or owners of property encumbered with The Woodlands Community Association (WCA) or The Woodlands Association Covenants (TWA) are eligible to vote in the RDRC election if they are 18 years of age or older and are members in good standing as defined in the Covenants. Individuals are eligible to vote in each Village RDRC election where they reside and/or own property.

**ARTICLE 11.2 VILLAGE ASSOCIATION ELECTIONS**. As established by the By-Laws of each separate Village Association, residents of the Village who are 18 years of age or older and are members in good standing as defined in the WCA/TWA Covenants, are members of the Village Association and eligible to vote in each village association election where they reside and/or own property.

#### **ARTICLE 12 – OFFICIATING**

**ARTICLE 12.1 ELECTION JUDGES**. An Election Judge must be present at each polling location on Election Day during all hours the polling location is open. Election Judges may not officiate at a polling site for a village where they hold an elected position. The members of the Election Committee may serve as the Election Judges, provided that they are not running for office in the particular election year. The President's Office may recruit individuals to be compensated for their service. In addition, The President and staff designated by the President may serve as Election Judges.

**ARTICLE 12.2 ELECTION WORKERS.** Poll workers operate the polls and/or participate in vote counting once the polls are closed. The President's Office may recruit individuals to be compensated for their service. In addition, staff designated by the President may serve as poll workers. Election Workers may not run for office in the current election and may not work at a polling site for a village where they hold an elected position. A candidate for office or a known relative of a candidate for office may not work at the polls or as a vote counter for any election.

#### **ARTICLE 13 – OPERATING THE POLLS**

**ARTICLE 13.1 POLLING SITE IDENTIFICATION.** Signs identifying the polling site must be posted at each polling site by 7 A.M. on Election Day. In addition, a marker noting 25 feet from the polling site entrance will be made to limit electioneering in the entry area.

**ARTICLE 13.2 BALLOT BOXES**. A locked ballot box will be provided for each polling site. The ballot box may not be opened during the election and must remain locked until delivered to the counting location.

**ARTICLE 13.3 VOTING.** Voting will be by secret written ballot and deposited by the voter into locked ballot boxes.

**ARTICLE 13.4 BALLOTS**. All unused, damaged or spoiled ballots will be tallied and brought to the counting location in the container provided. No ballots may be discarded or removed from the polling site.

#### **ARTICLE 14 – VOTING**

**ARTICLE 14.1 PROOF OF VOTER ELIGIBILITY**. Each voter must provide proof of property ownership or residency within The Woodlands. This proof must include the address of residency or ownership. Township property tax statement, voter registration card, printed bank checks, utility bills, driver's license; title or lease papers can be used to establish residency or ownership. A driver's license that has been clipped or marked in any manner will be acceptable for proof of residency only if accompanied by a copy of the application for a new license.

**ARTICLE 14.2 GOOD STANDING.** An owner or resident is ineligible to vote during any period when delinquent in the payment of any previous WCA or TWA Annual Assessments or in violation of the Covenants, as determined by a court order or judgment. A list of members not in good standing will be provided to each Election Judge serving at each polling location.

**ARTICLE 14.3 RECEIPT OF BALLOT.** Once eligibility has been established, the voter should sign the Voter Registration Log as evidence he/she has received a ballot. Each voter must sign his/her own name (i.e. John Smith...Jane Smith; not Mr. & Mrs. Smith).

**ARTICLE 14.4 INSTRUCTING THE VOTER**. The voter will be handed a ballot and an explanation provided on how to complete the ballot and where to deposit it when finished voting. The Poll Worker should watch to make sure the ballot is placed in the ballot box.

**ARTICLE 14.5 CONVENIENCE VOTING.** Convenience Voting will be held at the Township office, Monday through Friday, during the work week prior to the election, from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. The procedures for voting during the convenience voting period will be the same as the procedures for voting on the election date itself.

**ARTICLE 14.6 ABSENTEE VOTING.** Eligible voters will be qualified to vote by absentee ballot if (a) they will be out of the county during the entire convenience voting period and on election day; (b) if they are 65 years of age or older; (c) if they are disabled; (d) if they are in jail.

Those persons qualified to vote by absentee ballot may call the Township office and request an absentee ballot. The absentee ballot certification form, absentee ballot, return envelope and ballot envelope will be provided to the qualified person. Qualified voters will return their completed certification form and ballot that is sealed in the ballot envelope, by mail. The completed certification form must bear an original signature of the voter. Returned absentee ballots are recorded and placed unopened in the sealed ballot box and counted on Election Day. The names of those persons voting by absentee ballot will be noted in the voter registration log.

The absentee balloting period begins the day convenience voting begins. All absentee ballots received by 5 P.M. on the day prior to Election Day shall be accepted. Ballots received after the 5 P.M. deadline will not be accepted, regardless of the reason for receipt after the deadline.

**ARTICLE 14.7 PROXY**. In accordance with the Covenants and By-Laws of the separate entities, no proxy votes may be accepted.

#### **ARTICLE 15 – CLOSING THE POLLS**

**ARTICLE 15.1 TIME**. The polls will close promptly at 6 P.M. Voters inside the polling location at 6 P.M. may complete the process. No voters may vote if they arrive after the polls close.

**ARTICLE 15.2 BALLOT BOX**. The locked ballot box must be delivered to the counting location immediately after the polls close by the appointed Election Judge.

**ARTICLE 15.3 UNUSED BALLOTS AND OTHER ELECTION MATERIALS.** Unused, damaged or spoiled ballots must be returned to the counting location in the container provided. All other election materials, including official signs, registration materials and logs are the property of the Township and must be returned to the counting location immediately after the polls close.

#### **ARTICLE 16 – ELECTION RESULTS**

**ARTICLE 16.1 COUNTING VOTES.** Votes may be counted by Election Workers or Election Committee Members who are not candidates for office. Election Workers or Election Committee Members may not work as counters for the Village in which they own property or reside. All counters will complete the tally sheets and sign the sheet attesting to the fairness and accuracy of the count.

**ARTICLE 16.2 COUNTING LOCATION**. The counting of the ballots will be done at the Township offices, immediately after the polls close.

**ARTICLE 16.3 RECOUNTS**. Any candidate may request a recount within 48 hours of the results having been posted. Recounts will be performed by persons other than those who conducted original count.

**ARTICLE 16.4 CERTIFICATION OF ELECTION RESULTS**. The Chair of The Woodlands Township Board of Directors will appoint a Township board member not running in the RDRC or Village Association election to monitor staff as votes are tabulated on Election Night. The appointed board member will also certify the election results afterwards.

**ARTICLE 16.5 POSTING OF ELECTION RESULTS**. Results of the election will be posted on The Woodlands Township website as soon as verified as accurate.

**ARTICLE 16.6 WINNER**. The candidates for any Residential Design Review Committee who receive the highest number of votes shall fill the number of positions available in sequential descending order of plurality of votes.

The winning candidates for Village Association election shall be determined in accordance with the requirements of their individual By-Laws.

**ARTICLE 16.7 TIE VOTES**. A tie vote in any RDRC election will be settled by a lottery, with all candidates involved in the tie invited to attend. Said lottery must be witnessed by two Election Judges. A tie vote in any Village Association election will be settled by that Village Association.

**ARTICLE 16.8 DISQUALIFICATION**. Any candidate who wins an election but is found to not meet the qualifications for candidacy as defined in these procedures, and has not yet been seated in office, shall be disqualified from taking office. In the event of this disqualification, the candidate with the next highest number of votes shall be considered the election winner and will be seated in office.

Any candidate who wins an election and is seated in office and is subsequently found to not meet the qualifications for candidacy as defined in these procedures, shall be found to be disqualified and his/her seat shall be considered to be vacated. This vacant seat shall then be filled in accordance with the By-Laws of that entity.